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Dr. von Bergmann has not spared in his exposition of particular theories, and the monograph is a stout volume of four hundred and forty pages. His fullness of treatment in places suggests a history of theories of consumption rather than of crises. But the text is nowhere padded, and even the passages which impress the reader as not strictly relevant are read by him with interest and care. The broad field has been well covered, and Robertson and Hobson are among the few writers of importance omitted from consideration. The exposition of widely-different theories is ordinarily fair and sympathetic and the author's comments, while often regrettably scant, are never superficial or hypercritical. The book can fairly be described as a needed piece of work skillfully done.

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*The Key of the Pacific. The Nicaragua Canal.* By ARCHIBALD ROSS COLQUHOUN. With numerous illustrations, plans and maps. Pp. xvii, 443, including eight appendices. Price, \$7.00. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1895.

Mr. Colquhoun tells the reader that he will "find in these pages the results of an examination of the problem in all its varied bearings." As a matter of fact, however, only the technical and descriptive aspects of the Nicaragua Canal project receive adequate consideration.

The book opens with a general description of the three main schemes of isthmus transit, the Tehuantepec ship railway, the Panama canal, and the Nicaragua canal, and at the close of the first chapter the author gives his reasons for deciding in favor of the Nicaragua route. The route itself is then briefly described and in this second chapter the operations of the present Maritime Canal Company and the Construction Company are also set forth. Then follows a rather superficial discussion of the important question of the guaranty of the bonds of the Maritime Canal Company by the United States Government. Though an Englishman, Mr. Colquhoun thinks that the canal should be placed under the auspices of the United States Government. He believes, however, that the canal route should be neutralized among the powers, and refers to Suez for his precedent. But it is a question how far the neutralization of the Suez Canal is effective while the English continue to occupy Egypt and control the outlet of the Red Sea. Then, again, the reference to Suez is not apposite, for this eastern canal is distant from the countries concerned and does not affect their problems of national defence and internal communication. But as President Hayes said, the Nicaragua

Canal will virtually constitute part of the coast line of the United States and join their Atlantic and Pacific seaboard. On this account American statesmen have come to believe that the ownership and political control of the canal cannot well be separated. This is indeed an interesting question of international politics, and deserves more careful consideration than the author has accorded it.

The engineering problem receives much more adequate treatment, and this discussion, covering two chapters, constitutes the best portion of the book. It is interesting to compare the conclusions reached by Mr. Colquhoun with those lately set forth by the United States Canal Board. Mr. Colquhoun is, on the whole, more optimistic as to the present plans than are the government experts. He recognizes the difficulties involved in the Ochoa dam, the Great Divide, and Greytown Harbor; but does not find the obstacles insurmountable. The Canal Board, on the other hand, hesitates to recommend the present proposals on the basis of the data thus far collected. Both authorities agree, however, in considering the project of a ship canal through Nicaragua feasible. In regard to the matter of probable cost the two are also substantially in accord. The Canal Company's estimate of \$70,000,000 is regarded by both as far too low. Mr. Colquhoun allows \$150,000,000, and the Canal Board gives a provisional estimate of \$133,472,893.

Mr. Colquhoun's "Historical Sketch of Interoceanic Projects" is accurate as far as it goes; but there are so many important omissions that the historical aspects of the question are practically not considered at all.

The descriptive portion of the work which follows is interesting, instructive, and well written. This account of Nicaragua's people and resources is also of present importance; for when the canal is built, all this fertile depression will be opened up, and the region traversed is indeed rich in latent opportunity.

The demand of the age for ship canals is next considered, and under the caption, "The Value of Canal and Lake," a summary is given of the views of European and American statesmen on the political aspects of the transit question.

The concluding chapter, dealing with the commercial effects of the canal, is very suggestive. The natural markets for the products of our Atlantic and Gulf seaboard and the Mississippi Valley are situated in the Pacific, and Mr. Colquhoun shows quite clearly how the United States will be benefited by having the countries of the west coast of South America and those of the Far East brought into close communication with their manufacturing centres. The author is an authority on the trade problems of the Far East, and his conclusions

should therefore be carefully noted by our merchants and manufacturers. Mr. Colquhoun fully recognizes that the canal will do far more for the United States than it will for Europe, and he says, speaking from the English standpoint, "The facts embodied in this work point with irresistible force the lesson that, with increased competition with the United States in the Far East as the inevitable result of the opening of the Nicaragua Canal, we shall have to bestir ourselves if we desire to maintain our commercial supremacy."

The book contains many maps, plans and charts, but nothing new is added in this way to the material already published by the Canal Company. The illustrations also are numerous, and add greatly to the attractive appearance of the work.

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*Proportional Representation.* By JOHN R. COMMONS, Ph. D. Pp. 298. Price, \$1.75. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1896.

Within the last few years the advocates of proportional representation have won so many adherents in this country and have been making such active efforts to further their cause that an adequate book explaining the views of the chief representatives of that system has been much needed. This work by Professor Commons, one of the most active members of the Proportional Representation League, gives the most complete and the fairest explanation of the different systems that has yet appeared in English; indeed, with the exception of the work, "*La Representation Proportionnelle*," published in 1888 under the auspices of the Society for the Study of Proportional Representation in Paris, there is nothing in any language that may be compared with it. The earlier work gives more historical matter than does the later, but Professor Commons has given us in many ways a more practical exposition of the different systems than was given in the earlier work, and his book brings the subject up to date.

It is easy to be seen from the work itself that it is written by a man who not only ardently believes in the system, but by one who wishes to convert others. It opens with a brief chapter on the "Failure of Representative Assemblies," in which some of the well-known weaknesses of our present system are pointed out. A very suggestive chapter on the origin and development of representative assemblies follows, which gives a very satisfactory explanation of the reasons why our present system that somewhat earlier seemed satisfactory enough, now proves so very inadequate. The same subject is continued in much greater detail in the chapters on "The District System at Work." In perhaps no other place can one find in compact shape, so complete